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PROGRAMMING AND COORDINATION MATTERS RELATED TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Proposed programme of work of the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 1996-1997

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

In regulation 3.1 and rules 103.2, 103.3 and 103.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation of the United Nations, the intergovernmental body concerned with specific programmes is requested to provide comments on the proposed work programme for the next biennium. The note contains initial proposals being considered by the Secretary-General for incorporation in the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. The Commission is requested to make any comments that it feels might need to be taken into account by the Secretary-General in preparing the proposed programme budget.

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1. The Commission on the Status of Women may wish to review the proposed programme of work on the advancement of women and provide its comments to the Secretary-General. It should be borne in mind that, in accordance with the terms of regulation 3.1 and rules 103.2, 103.3 and 103.6 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/PPBME/Rules/1 (1987)), while the suggestions or recommendations on the substance of the work programme by the intergovernmental body concerned may be taken into account in the course of the preparation and review of the programme budget, the Secretary-General cannot commit himself to the adoption of such suggestions or recommendations before the completion of the proposed programme budget.

2. The proposed programme of work contained in the annex is submitted in accordance with the relevant regulations and rules governing programme planning. It is based on the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/214.

3. The programme for the advancement of women is based on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. The work for the biennium 1996-1997 is currently governed by the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 and contains only output that has been explicitly mandated by recent resolutions or by the Forward-looking Strategies. It does not take into account any additional work that may be mandated as a result of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace.

4. Under the programme of work for the biennium 1996-1997, priority will continue to be given to providing the Commission on the Status of Women with high-quality substantive support in the form of policy reports and servicing. Priority will also be given to the substantive and technical servicing of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in the light of an increasing volume of reports for consideration. Efforts will be made to implement the responsibilities assigned to the Division in the area of women's human rights by the World Conference on Human Rights in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. A particular effort will be made to strengthen the capacity of the Division in the area of inter-agency coordination and relations with non-governmental organizations and national machinery for the advancement of women.

5. Bearing in mind this information, the Commission may wish to comment on the proposed programme of work and proposed priorities of the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 1996-1997.

Annex

PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE DIVISION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

A. Subprogramme 1. Equality

1. Current situation and orientation of the subprogramme for the biennium

1. The subprogramme consists of substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women and technical and substantive support to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in pursuit of the objective of equality, as set out in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Progress in implementing the provisions of the medium-term plan has been steady and has been sharpened by the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the results of which may change the orientation of the programme budget for 1996-1997 reflected in these proposals. During the biennium the programme will seek to improve the quality of the servicing provided to the Commission and the Committee in implementing their long-term mandates. This will include the preparation of priority themes under the rubric of equality for consideration by the Commission, as well as undertaking the analyses and providing the information necessary for the Committee to complete its tasks under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It will also involve assisting in implementing new or reinforced mandates in the area of women's human rights arising from the World Conference on Human Rights. This implies an increase in the use of the communications procedure for the Commission on the Status of Women, including publicizing it and encouraging more communications; monitoring the incorporation of gender concerns in the work of other bodies in the human rights regime; support to the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and other efforts to implement and monitor the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women; development of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women that would include a petition procedure; and, in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights, increasing the training and advisory services on reporting and other aspects of treaty implementation related to gender, human rights and the Convention.

2. Activities

2. The activities conducted by the Division will consist of:

(a) Work designed to promote the development of legal instruments:

(i) Analytical studies on the development of an optional protocol for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including a review of the functioning of such protocols in other human rights instruments and consultation with States parties;

(ii) Study, based on national experience, of national approaches to the implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, with a view to determining the effectiveness of the instrument and the possible need for a further instrument;

(b) Work related to external relations:

Efforts to engage non-governmental organizations in support of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women through presentations to meetings of non-governmental organizations working in the area of women's human rights, briefing individual non-governmental organizations and facilitating communication between non-governmental organizations and members of the Committee. Monitoring of and presentations to regional intergovernmental bodies, as necessary, on regional instruments on women's human rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of Violence against Women of the Organization of American States;

(c) Substantive output:

(i) Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its fifteenth and sixteenth sessions (1996, 1997);

(ii) Reports to be submitted to the General Assembly on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1996, 1997);

(iii) Reports to be submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on (a) a separate analysis of initial and periodic reports by States parties to the Convention being presented to the Committee (30 reports, 1996, 1997); (b) the identification of trends in implementation of article 4 of the Convention (1996) and other specific articles to be determined (1997) or specific recommendations made by the Committee to aid it in its consideration of reports by States parties (two reports: 1996, 1997); (c) ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee (1996, 1997); (d) implications of the priority themes of the Commission on the Status of Women for the work of the Committee (1996, 1997);

(iv) Reports to be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women on: (a) the list of confidential and non-confidential communications relating to the status of women (1996, 1997); (b) the elimination of stereotyping in the mass media (1996); (c) the priority theme to be selected at the thirty-ninth session (1995) of the Commission on the Status of Women (1997); (d) the work of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (1996);

(d) Substantive services for:

(i) The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (annual: 1996, 1997): preparing in-session drafts of the Committee's report; assisting the Committee's working group in drafting;

(ii) The Commission on the Status of Women (annual: 1996, 1997): preparing in-session drafts of the Commission's report; servicing its working groups, especially the Working Group on Communications; assisting in the drafting of resolutions;

(iii) The General Assembly (annual: 1996, 1997): advice on the texts of resolutions; summaries of the discussions for internal use;

(e) Technical (secretariat) services for:

(i) The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (annual: 1996,1997);

(ii) The Meeting of States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (biennial: 1996);

(f) Ad hoc expert group meetings and related preparatory work:

(i) An ad hoc expert group in 1996 on a priority theme under equality, to be selected by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session for consideration at its forty-first session; a Secretariat background paper will be prepared on the subject;

(ii) An ad hoc expert group in 1997 on a priority theme under equality, to be selected by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session for consideration at its forty-second session; a Secretariat background paper will be prepared on the subject.

3. Published material

3. The following recurrent publication will be produced: The Work of CEDAW, vols. 5 and 6 (annual: 1996, 1997).

4. Operational activities

4. The Division's operational activities will consist of two subregional seminars on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1996, 1997) (extrabudgetary).

B. Subprogramme 2. Development

1. Current situation and orientation of the subprogramme for the biennium

5. The subprogramme consists of substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women in pursuit of the objective of development, as set out in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Progress in implementing the provisions of the medium-term plan has been steady and has been sharpened by the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the

results of which may change the orientation of the programme budget for 1996-1997 reflected in these proposals. During the previous biennium priority was given to the preparation of the 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development. This publication will have been discussed by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. During the biennium the programme will seek to improve the quality of the servicing provided to the Commission in implementing its long-term mandates. This will include the preparation of priority themes under the rubric of development for consideration by the Commission, as well as undertaking analyses and providing the information on gender and development necessary for incorporation in reports prepared by other Secretariat units, including those related to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.

2. Activities

6. The activities undertaken by the Division will consist of:

(a) Substantive output:

(i) Report to be submitted to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council on effective mobilization of Women in Development (1997);

(ii) Reports to be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women on priority themes under the rubric of development, to be determined by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session (1996, 1997);

(b) Substantive services for:

(i) The Commission on the Status of Women (annual: 1996, 1997): preparing in-session drafts of the Commission's report; assisting in the drafting of resolutions;

(ii) The Economic and Social Council (biennial: 1997): introducing the item on effective mobilization of Women in Development; responding to questions; assisting in the drafting of resolutions;

(iii) The General Assembly (biennial: 1997): advice on the texts of resolutions; and preparing summaries of the discussions for internal use;

(c) Ad hoc expert group meetings and related preparatory work:

(i) An ad hoc expert group in 1996 on a priority theme under development, to be selected by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session for consideration at its forty-first session; a Secretariat background paper will be prepared on the subject;

(ii) An ad hoc expert group in 1997 on a priority theme under development, to be selected by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-

ninth session for consideration at its forty-second session; a Secretariat background paper will be prepared on the subject.

C. Subprogramme 3. Peace

1. Current situation and orientation of the subprogramme for the biennium

7. The subprogramme consists of substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women in pursuit of the objective of peace, as set out in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Progress in implementing the provisions of the medium-term plan has been steady and has been sharpened by the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the results of which may change the orientation of the programme budget for 1996-1997 reflected in these proposals. During the previous biennium a new effort was made to undertake an analysis that would suggest how gender factors can be incorporated in the implementation of the Agenda for Peace and in maintaining statistics on women in decision-making. This work will continue during the biennium. During the biennium the programme will also continue to improve the quality of the servicing provided to the Commission in implementing its long-term mandates. This will include the preparation of priority themes under the rubric of peace for consideration by the Commission, as well as undertaking analyses and providing the information on gender and peace necessary for incorporation in reports prepared by other Secretariat units.

2. Activities

8. The activities conducted by the Division will consist of:

(a) Substantive output: reports to be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women on priority themes under the rubric of peace, to be determined by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session (1996, 1997);

(b) Substantive services for the Commission on the Status of Women (annual: 1996, 1997): preparing in-session drafts of the Commission's report; assisting in the drafting of resolutions;

(c) Ad hoc expert group meetings and related preparatory work:

(i) An ad hoc expert group in 1996 on a priority theme under peace, to be selected by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session for consideration at its forty-first session; a Secretariat background paper will be prepared on the subject;

(ii) An ad hoc expert group in 1997 on a priority theme under peace, to be selected by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-ninth session for consideration at its forty-second session; a Secretariat background paper will be prepared on the subject.

3. Published material

9. The following recurrent publication will be produced: update of the database on women in decision-making positions (1997).

D. Subprogramme 4. Monitoring, review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women

1. Current situation and orientation of the subprogramme for the biennium

10. The subprogramme comprises the monitoring, coordination and outreach activities of the United Nations programme on women, including its efforts to incorporate gender issues in the mainstream work of the United Nations. During the preceding biennium, this subprogramme was almost exclusively concerned with the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. However, it was the area of the programme where the least progress was achieved in terms of the medium-term plan; accordingly, the implementation of this subprogramme will be given particular attention by the Fourth World Conference on Women, the results of which may change the orientation of the programme budget for 1996-1997 reflected in these proposals. During the biennium the programme will also continue to improve the monitoring for the Commission in implementing its long-term mandates. There will be an increased effort to improve system-wide coordination in the advancement of women based on a revision of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women to be prepared in the light of the Conference. This will involve systemizing the preparation and dissemination of information on the advancement of women, especially to national machineries but also to non-governmental organizations.

2. Activities

11. The activities to be undertaken by the Division will consist of:

(a) International cooperation:

(i) Liaison with a network of non-governmental organizations concerned with the advancement of women, including the Vienna, Geneva and New York committees on non-governmental organizations (1996, 1997);

(ii) Substantive support to meetings of non-governmental organizations that take place at the time of the annual sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Commission on the Status of Women;

(b) Substantive output:

(i) Reports to be submitted to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (1996, 1997);

(ii) Reports to be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women on: (a) system-wide monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies (1996); (b) revision of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women (1996);

(c) Substantive services for:

(i) The General Assembly (annual: 1996, 1997): introducing the item on the advancement of women; responding to questions; preparing summaries of the discussion for internal use; providing assistance in the drafting of resolutions;

(ii) The Economic and Social Council (annual: 1996, 1997): introducing the item on the advancement of women; responding to questions; preparing summaries of the discussion for internal use; providing assistance in the drafting of resolutions;

(iii) The Commission on the Status of Women (annual: 1996, 1997): introducing items; preparing in-session drafts of the Commission's report; providing assistance in the drafting of resolutions.

3. Published material

12. The following recurrent publications will be produced:

(i) Directory of Focal Points within the United Nations System on Questions Relating to Women (1996);

(ii) Directory of National Machinery for the Advancement of Women (1996, 1997);

(iii) Women 2000 (four issues in 1996 and 1997);

(iv) WIS Accessions List (two issues in 1996 and 1997).

4. Coordination, harmonization and liaison

13. The following services and material will be provided:

(i) Technical services to the annual ACC inter-agency meetings on women: preparing background papers and reports of the meetings (1996, 1997);

(ii) Coordination with other international and world conferences and events: (a) United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II) (1996); (b) International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (1996).